2:Musil S-4,5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

from Arabia, they act as agents for the importing of coffee, spices, and rice, not only by ship or railroad but also by pack camels, and they supply the Bedouins with arms. There is no large settlement in inner Arabia where an agent of Eben Bassâm does not reside. 442

The Âl Sâlem family also is now engaged almost exclusively in the buying and selling of camels. These merchants hail from ad-Der'ijje but live at Bagdad and Damascus. Members of this family once helped the Wahhâbite princes of the Eben Sa'ûd family with money, and even now they have many friends in Neǧd.

The third firm engaged in trading in camels — also in clothing — is the Âl 'Îsa family. They reside at Damascus and trade chiefly with the 'Aneze and Ḥwêṭât tribes.

The wholesale dealers hardly ever visit inner Arabia. They have their middlemen to whom they furnish money for dealings on their behalf. All these middlemen or agents are natives of al-Kaṣim and are called 'Akejl, whether they belong to the tribe of that name or not. An 'Akejli agent gets money from the wholesale dealer to buy camels from a certain tribe. He drives the animals which he has bought to Egypt or al-Baṣra or al-Kwejt where he sells them, dividing the net profit with the wholesale dealer in such a way that the latter gets two-thirds or half of it. If the agreement was that the wholesale dealer was to get two-thirds, he must stand the entire loss that may result from the transaction; in the other case the loss is shared equally. It should be said in explanation of this that the demand for camels is not always the same. Often prices in Egypt and al-Baṣra rise suddenly; the Bedouins learn this and ask more too; the middleman or speculator, as he might be called, has to buy dear, but when he brings the camels to the market the price may have fallen and he must sell at a loss. 442 446 [435 455]

Such an 'Akejli agent hires assistants, usually his countrymen from al-Kaṣim, provides himself with light white tents, coffee, rice, and often also arms both for sale and exchange, and rides with letters of recommendation to the prince or chief of the tribe from which he means to buy. Having delivered the letters and gifts sent to those dignitaries by the wholesale dealer, he puts up his tents either in the prince's camp or, if permitted, in the camp of some chief. The chief of the camp where the trader has put up his tents is also his host, 442 437